



SHIKAR CAMP

Dear Home,

I don't know when the next mail shipment will be going out of camp - perhaps not for another week or so. Our camp has turned out to be quite an interesting affair. Before we reached it, Udai said to Tom, "This Camp is not going to fancy like the last one you had the year before" Well, my heart sunk low. But it has turned out to be very comfortable. Tom and I are lodged in a large tent that has had an awning of leaves laid over it to protect us from the terrible sun (about 110° and getting hotter as summer approaches). There is no rest house like we thought we were going to get. All the seven or eight huts around our tent are made of bamboo and leaves. Our camp is situated at the edge of a pleasant river which divides the thick forest around us. There is quite a bit of animal life around us - including tigers. There are at least four tigers in the area and many leopards.

Our first day in camp has proved to be our most exciting. We had driven out to sight in Tom's rifles when no sooner had we arrived at shooting sight than a local village woman walked up to the hill and quietly said something to Udai our guide. It brought only one word, "Sharn", which means tiger. Then was a wounded tiger charging the women at the river bank. We drove like hell down to the river, and doubled back across to the other bank where the villagers were waiting by the spot where the tiger had rested. Udai had the signs and said that it could also be a leopard. We had three beats for the animal and then gave up. However during those

beats & now they first peacocks and wild jungle fowl. These junglefowl are the grey junglefowl and one very beautiful. Udai is going to try to shoot me one. They are extremely wild - but not as wild as Beebe led me to expect. At night and in the early morning the grey junglefowl cocks continue to challenge each other in the darkness. They sound like "Chuck Chuck Chuck ka luck". Of course there are the calls of the wild peafowl and the howling of the monkeys. There are several varieties of parakeets around us. (Have seen no short tailed parakeets).

I have been sick for the last couple of days with a light case of the sunnies but I have almost recovered. Tom has been much harder hit and is far from well. As far as food is concerned, I have more than enough. Even Tom is amazed. We have three squares every day and all the Tea, pineapple juice and orange juice we can drink - All Sri Lankan. Actually Cony life is very comfortable and everything is done for us including the best laundry job I've ever had. The only thing that bothers me is the damned heat. There is nothing one can do during the really hot hours between 11:00 to 3:30. The nights however are cool and both Tom and I lay around and try to survive till night comes. Sleeping is difficult in this heat. Scott, Udai our guide has a radio which is playing most of the time. All of the music is Raga music and the mood that it casts during the after noon heat is like something out of the movies. Heard on the radio that Liz Taylor and Paul Scholfield got Oscars and that "A Man for All Seasons" got best picture. His turn between that film and "Virginia Wolf" which might have been a slightly better picture. Oh well - have no complaints. Hollywood has shown some sanity at last. Well, that's all for now. I am feeling good (after my bug) and am very comfortable except between 11:00 and 3:30. OH WELL JUST WAIT UNTIL I GET ACCIMATIZED. P.S. Tell the Browns that T. and I are going to treat his ^{time} ~~time~~ ^{kill} ~~kill~~ with ^{their} ~~their~~ ^{Gentling of India} ~~del~~.